

Thumbs up for Lissa's lockdown bike rides

Lissa McIntyre was over the moon when she got the news from Trading Standards officers that she can safely continue to offer bike rides on her customised trishaw Betsy even during lockdown.

Previously she had concerns about continuing to offer the rides to her customers, but now having put rigorous Covid-19 safety procedures in place Lissa is raring to go.

There is room on board Betsy for two passengers (if there is more than one passenger they must be from one extended household) and while most rides take place in The Meadows, Lissa also ventures to Inverleith Park, Harrison Park and the cycle path network. There are also other routes along some quieter streets, and it is possible for customers to specify where they want to go.

The business began in March 2019 and had just completed a very successful first year when lockdown began. Almost all of the customers in the first 12 months were care home residents, but Lissa explained that many people who live at home are happy to get out in the fresh air too.



Lissa McIntyre of Joy Rides Edinburgh PHOTO ©2021 The Edinburgh Reporter

At Christmas time the energetic entrepreneur dressed up as an elf and delivered Christmas presents with Betsy, but since the

latest lockdown began in January she has been wary of drumming up new business.

Lissa said: “Trading Standards confirmed to me that as long as I have all the safety procedures in place then I can continue to offer rides to everyone. In fact they commented it was probably more damaging for people to be stuck at home indoors. I have to make sure the bike is clean, and I am not allowed to help people onto the bike – that has to be someone from their own household. It is as safe as I can make it.

“One really kind person bought three rides to be donated to someone who would like to go out. It was really nice of them and clearly if anyone else wants to pay it forward like that then I would be delighted to hear from them.”



Lissa with customers Ken and Liz Hare

Lissa has also made new arrangements with a couple of charities who have some funding and who want to spread some cheer among their own communities. And she would be happy to

hear from any charities who may have funding to spend in that way.

Joanna Cherry QC MP has always liked Lissa's business idea since it began. Ms Cherry said: "The pandemic has been very isolating for everyone but particularly for older people. I was pleased to support Lissa in working with The City of Edinburgh Council and The Scottish Government to restart Joy Rides with extra precautions to protect their clients. I hope that through them as many people as possible can experience the joy of fresh air on a bike tour with Lissa."

The safety procedures include asking all passengers to bring their own blankets and warm clothes. They must wear a mask, have their temperature checked beforehand and will be asked for full contact details ahead of the journey. Passengers will also be asked to confirm that they do not have any Covid-19 symptoms. The bike will be cleaned twice before any new passenger steps aboard for a whirl around the city streets or parks.

All rides must be booked in advance by emailing Lissa at joyridesedinburgh@gmail.com or telephone 07834 916 230.

<https://joyridesedinburgh.com>



Lissa McIntyre and her mum Carole on a JoyRide through the Newtown. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com